Minnesota STAR Program
A System of Technology to Achieve Results

Minnesota STAR PROGRAM

Minnesota's Assistive Technology Act Program

Constellations

Assistive Technology (AT) Works!

Have you STARTEd yet?

STAR is proud to announce the launch of STAR Technology Exchange (STARTE), a free online service for people looking to donate, sell or buy previously owned assistive technology.

"STARTE accepts a variety of technology that can assist with daily needs and tasks such as reading, hearing, speaking, moving around and using a computer," said Chuck Rassbach, STAR Program director. "It's a good way to re-use assistive technology, rather than having it collecting dust in the back of a closet or the attic."

STARTE is easy to use and has helpful features. Registered users can search for items by category and geographic proximity based on zip code, county or mileage, and can filter results by price. Users can also bookmark items or request e-mail notification when a specific item is posted.

So, isn't it time you STARTEd? Visit the STAR Technology Exchange at www.mnstarte.org.

In This Issue

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Don't have access to the Internet? STAR staff will review current listings or post items on your behalf. Call us at 651-201-2640 or Toll-free at 1-888-234-1267. TTY users call 1-800-627-2527 or MN Relay at 711. Speech Relay users call 1-877-627-3848.

Admin Minnesota
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

Provider Spotlight - Regional Assistive Technology Center (RATC)

The Regional Assistive Technology Center (RATC), located at Minnesota State University Moorhead, provides assessments and consultations in the areas of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), alternative access, computer technology, reading and written communication. These assessments and/or consultations are done at the Center or on-site in the home, school, vocational/work setting and community. An equipment and resource library has dedicated communication devices, hardware, and software available for short term loan for a nominal fee. Loan requests are received from consumers, families, and professionals. Additional services include workshops, training sessions on technology operation and implementation, and assistance preparing funding requests.

For more information contact:

Marie Swanson, Director
Regional Assistive Technology Center
Higher Education Center
Minnesota State University Moorhead

Telephone:　　218-477-2288
Email:　　　　swansonm@mnstate.edu

Access the Internet through your Phone

A new service known as netEcho™ allows users to dial a toll-free number from any phone and use voice commands to:

- ♦　Surf any Web site
- ♦　Search for information
- ♦　Check e-mail
- ♦　Conduct e-commerce

For more information call Internet Speech at 1-877-312-4638 or visit www.internetspeech.com.
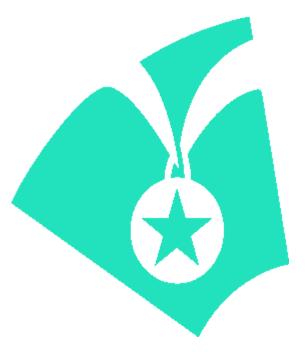
Awards for Excellence

STAR and its Advisory Council are seeking nominations for an award to recognize excellence in the area of assistive technology (AT).

The STAR Award for Excellence in Assistive Technology will recognize outstanding individual and organizational efforts in the use, promotion and advocacy, support, research & development, and other aspects of AT.

Awards will be presented to recipients in several categories:

- AT Consumer
- Advocate
- Business Supporting AT Users
- Educators
- Service Provider
- Product Developer
- Other Categories as suggested in the nomination form and supported by the award committee

There is no limit on the number of awards presented. There may be multiple awards within a category, or categories without award recipients.

Nominations are due to the STAR Program by February 15, 2007. An award ceremony at the State Capitol is planned for early April 2007. For more information or to request a nomination form, contact:

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Saint Paul, MN 55155

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Online Resources

Blogs, Wiki's, Webcasts, etc. New Tools for Students with Disabilities

http://closingthegap.wikispaces.com

Infinitec AT Blog - Infinite potential through assistive technology

http://infinitecillinois.blogspot.com

deafCensus - National Directory of Deaf and Hearing Loss-related Organizations

http://www.deafCensus.org

Gateway for Assistive Technology in Education and Workplace

http://www.gateway2at.org

Events

Family Center on Technology and Disability - Winter Institute Dec. 4-20, 2006
The *free* FCTD Winter Institute is offered entirely online, so that you can participate when and where it is most convenient for you. Discussion strands will be "Assistive Technology Funding" and "Effective Statewide Advocacy." Participants will be able to apply for and receive Continuing Education Units (CEUs), issued by RESNA, for their participation. You may register online at www.fctd.info.

No-Tech, Low-Tech Solutions (PACER Center) Dec. 6, 2006 6:00 to 8:30 p.m.

In this workshop, participants will learn about no-tech, low-tech assistive technology that can help their child with reading, writing, math, art, and communication. Presenters will share ideas about how to use and implement no-tech, low-tech assistive technology tools in the home and classroom settings. Participants will leave this workshop with a greater knowledge of no-tech, low-tech assistive technology and will create examples to take home. To register online go to www.pacer.org or call 800-537-2237.

Charting the Cs - April 23-24, 2007
The Charting the Cs conference has motivated and inspired educators for the past 15 years. The theme for the 2007 conference is *Involving All Students*. The conference will be held in central Minnesota. For more information contact Nikki Walker, Conference Coordinator at NikkiWalker@mac.com.

Online Training

DynaVox is archiving their Virtual Classes so that you can view previously recorded sessions at your convenience.   Session topics include:

♦   Introduction to Series 4: Application and Use
♦   Gateway to Language and Learning in the Classroom
♦   MiniMo and MightyMo

To view an archived session visit DynaVox online at www.dynavoxtech.com.

Consumers and Professionals Needed

BlueSky Designs was awarded a Phase II Small Business Innovation Research grant from the Department of Education's National Institutes on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR). They are also developing accessible mounting hardware through a research project funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Both projects focus on developing more independently accessible mounting hardware that attach to wheelchairs, beds or workstations. **Consumers and professionals are needed** to provide input through focus groups, interviews, usability testing, and extended testing in a person's own environment.

If you would like to be involved in focus groups or testing, give BlueSky Designs a call at 612-724-7002, or call toll-free from outside the Twin Cities at 888-724-7002.

Gillette Mobile Outreach wins Community Award

Congratulations to Gillette Technology Center Mobile Outreach for receiving the Minnesota State Council on Disability 2006 community award. Services provided by the mobile outreach clinic include:

■   Consult regarding a person's ability to use assistive technology equipment
■   Fit, fabricate or modify assistive technology equipment
■   Train clients, families, caregivers, teachers, employers and others how to repair and operate assistive technology equipment
■   Assess equipment needs for home, work or school

Clinic schedules and a map of outreach sites are available at http://www.gillettechildrens.org.

Congratulations!

Dianne Goodwin

Minnesota-based BlueSky Designs founder, Dianne Goodwin, was appointed to the RESNA Board of Directors in August. RESNA, the Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America, is the leading North American professional organization focused on advancing Assistive Technology and Rehabilitation Engineering. www.resna.org

In June, Goodwin accepted a position on the Board of Directors of Minneapolis-based AccessAbility, Inc., a not-for-profit, diversified training, employment and production facility. They provide training, work and recreational opportunities for individuals with disabilities and economic disadvantages who have barriers to employment and community inclusion. www.accessability.org

BlueSky Designs recently expanded and moved to a new facility in Minneapolis. For more information about BlueSky Designs, contact Dianne Goodwin at 612-724-7002, or visit BlueSky Designs' website at www.blueskydesigns.us

Carol Fury

On October 19, 2006 the Minnesota State Council on Disability presented Carol Fury with their Technology Award in recognition of her efforts to increase access to assistive technology and employment opportunities here in Minnesota. Ms. Fury is the Executive Director of ATMn and developed Access to Telework, a program that provides an alternative to traditional employment for Minnesotans with disabilities. To learn more about Access to Telework or Minnesota's Alternative Finance Program visit www.atmn.org.

Assistive Technology and Modifications Toolkit

The Minnesota Department of Human Services recently released its Assistive Technology and Modifications Toolkit. This toolkit is a collection of types of solutions and resources and is available at STAR's Web site (www.admin.state.mn/assistivetechnology).

Technology for Transition

Sometimes assistive technology isn't technology at all. Instead, it may be a strategy or service. For example, using color to create depth and accentuate architectural features may help people with limited sight and depth perception navigate and enjoy the architectural design of their home. Painting techniques that can make your home easier to see and navigate include:

- Broad stripes and patterns on vaulted ceilings to create a dimensional difference and distinguish ceiling surfaces
- Geometrical designs such as graphic squares to signal the end of a hallway
- Different colors to differentiate different rooms
- Painting architectural features such as a fireplace to contrast with the surrounding area

Colorful furniture and decorative accents such as dark or patterned rugs may also be used to add additional contrast and dimension to a room. Transforming a home with color is a fun way to add depth and dimension.

i.d.Mate OMNI

The **i.d. mate OMNI** is a portable talking bar code scanner used to identify items using the product's bar code or UPC. It comes equipped with a database of over one million products and descriptions. In addition, the user can quickly add additional voice recorded information to existing products or add items not found in the database. This device is available for short term loan through the Minnesota STAR Program.

Department of Administration
STAR Program
309 Administration Building
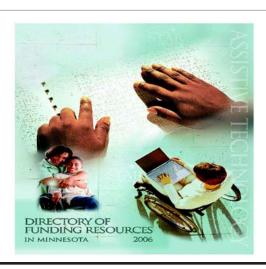50 Sherburne Avenue
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Phone: 651-201-2640
Fax: 651-282-6671
E-mail: star.program@state.mn.us

Check our Web site at
*www.admin.state.mn.us/
assistivetechnology*

Request a copy of the 2006 Assistive Technology Directory

Would you like a free copy of the 2006
Assistive Technology Directory of Funding
Resources? Call 651-201-2640 or toll-free
888-234-1267 to request one or more copies
of this popular directory.

All STAR materials are available in alternative formats

¡FOLLETOS EN ESPAÑOL! STAR ha empezado traducir folletos en Inglés a Español. Actualmente, STAR
tiene dos folletos en Español: "Directorio de Recursos de Financiamiento para Tecnología Asistiva en Minnesota" y
"El Programa STAR: Un Sistema de Tecnología para Lograr Resultados.

STAR does not endorse or recommend any particular product, individual or agency. The posting of information in
this newsletter and on STAR's Web site is educational in nature and does not imply endorsement by STAR's funder,
the Rehabilitation Services Administration.

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